

## **Healthy Kentuckians 2010: Tobacco Prevalence: Cigar and Other Tobacco Use**

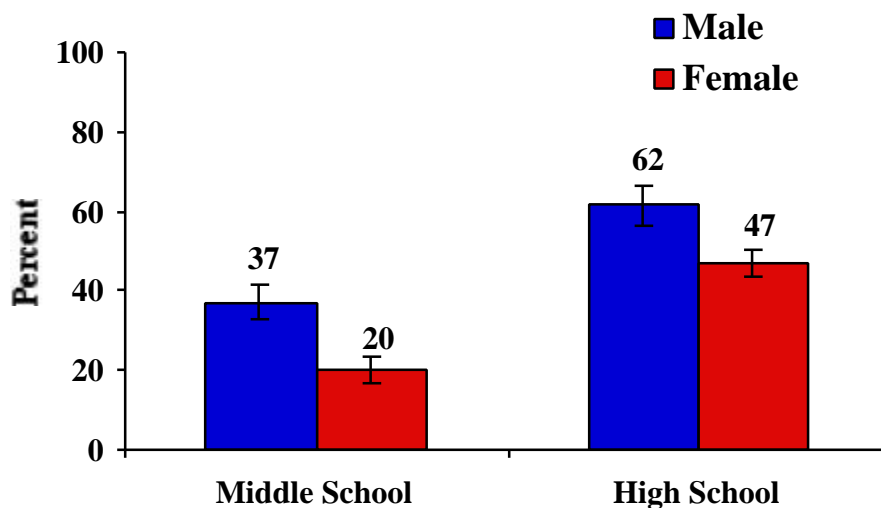
Healthy Kentuckians 2010 recommends monitoring of emergent trends in the use and distribution of tobacco products by youth (e.g., cigars, bidis). In addition, the Healthy Kentuckians 2010 Objectives include: increasing the proportion of young people who have never used cigar products, increasing the number of cigar users who attempt to quit, increasing the number of youth who disapprove of cigar use and associate harm with use, enhancing enforcement efforts to decrease the illegal sale of cigars to minors, and prohibiting cigar use on school campuses.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Lifetime Cigar Use

*Lifetime use is defined by the CDC as ever smoking a cigar, even one or two puffs.*

- ✓ Overall, 29% of middle school and 54% of high school students have ever smoked cigars.
- ✓ Regardless of grade, males are more likely to report lifetime cigar use than females.
- ✓ High school students are more likely than middle school students to smoke cigars.



**Figure 15. Lifetime use of cigars by gender**

### Background and Significance

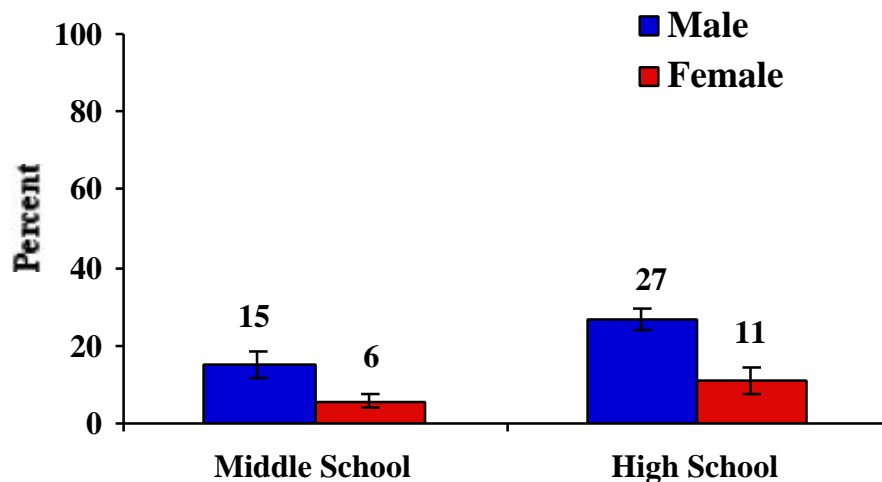
Cigar smoking represents a significant health risk and is not a safe alternative to cigarette smoking. Once a behavior limited primarily to older men, cigar smoking is now an activity of both male and female teenagers. Although very little was known until recently about the health risks of cigar smoking, there is now strong evidence of causal relationships between regular cigar use and cancers of the lungs, larynx, oral cavity, and esophagus.<sup>4</sup> Efforts to prevent tobacco use must pay particular attention to the use of cigars especially among males.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Current Cigar Use

*Current cigar use is defined by the CDC as smoking cigars on one or more of the past 30 days.*

- ✓ Overall, 11% of middle school and 19% of high school students are current cigar smokers.
- ✓ Nearly one-fifth of middle school males and almost one in three high school males are current cigar smokers.
- ✓ Regardless of grade, males are more likely to be current cigar smokers than females.
- ✓ High school males are more likely than middle school males to smoke cigars.
- ✓ There are no significant ethnic/racial differences in current cigar use among middle school or high school students.



**Figure 16. Current cigar use by gender**

### Background and Significance

Nationally, 6% of middle school students and 15% of high school students report smoking cigars on one or more of the past 30 days.<sup>1</sup> Although federal law requires states to enact laws prohibiting the sale of cigars and other tobacco products to minors, most youth report that they can purchase cigars easily.<sup>10</sup> In addition, health warnings are not required on cigar products, except in California.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Current Cigar use by Grade Level

*Current cigar use is defined by the CDC as smoking cigars on one or more of the past 30 days.*

- ✓ Cigar use increases significantly after 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

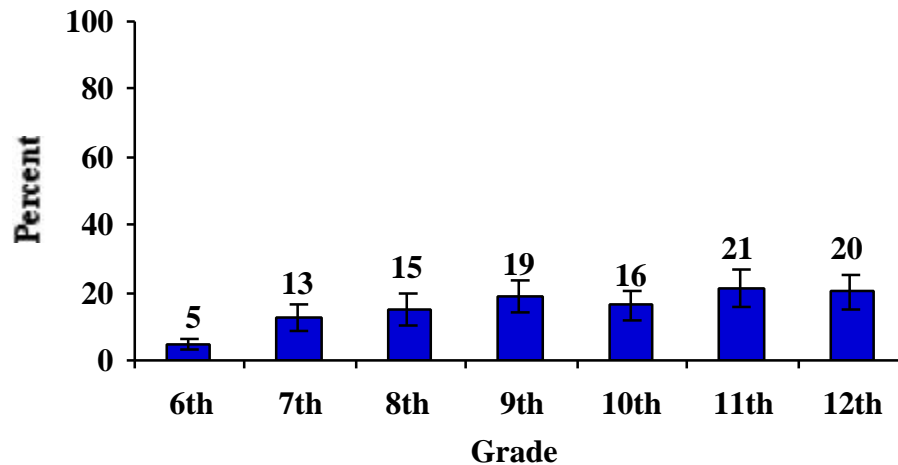


Figure 17. Current cigar use by grade

### Background and Significance

Current cigar use among Kentucky youth jumps significantly from 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and is well-established by 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Middle schools clearly play an important role in preventing the onset of cigar use.

## **Strategies for Reducing Cigar Use Based on CDC Best Practices**

### **Policy Development**

- ❑ Strengthen laws to restrict youth access to cigar products.
- ❑ Enact legislation to tax cigar products.
- ❑ Require health warning labels on all cigar products.
- ❑ Adopt state and local laws to prohibit secondhand smoke exposure in public places.

### **Community Mobilization**

- ❑ Involve community partners in documenting cigar manufacturer advertising and promotional campaigns.
- ❑ Monitor youth access to cigar products by conducting local surveys.

### **Information Dissemination/Media Advocacy**

- ❑ Publicize the health risks of cigar smoking.
- ❑ Conduct counter advertising campaigns to deglamorize cigars in magazines, movies, and television programs.

### **Professional Development and Training**

- ❑ Include information on cigar use in all tobacco prevention training workshops.
- ❑ Train local tobacco prevention coalition members on the hazard of cigar smoking.

### **Surveillance/Evaluation**

- ❑ Continue to monitor emerging trends in the use and distribution of cigars by conducting the Kentucky Youth Tobacco Survey.
- ❑ Monitor adult use of cigars by including cigar use items on the annual Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) telephone survey.
- ❑ Conduct research on cigar brand preferences among youth.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Lifetime Bidi or Kretek Use

*Lifetime use is defined by the CDC as having ever tried bidis or kreteks, even on only one occasion.*

- ✓ 7% of middle school and 10% of high school students report ever using bidis or kreteks.
- ✓ Regardless of gender, there are no significant differences in bidi or kretek use by grade.
- ✓ Regardless of grade, there are no ethnic differences in bidi or kretek use.

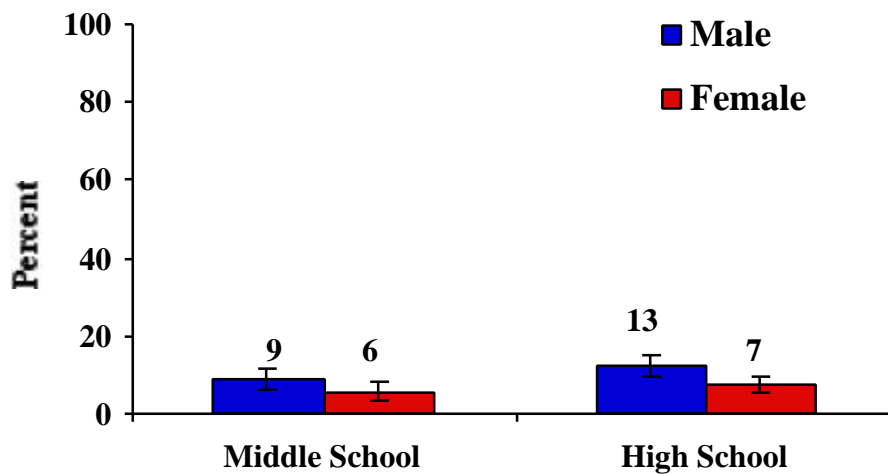


Figure 18. Lifetime use of bidis or kreteks by gender

### Background and Significance

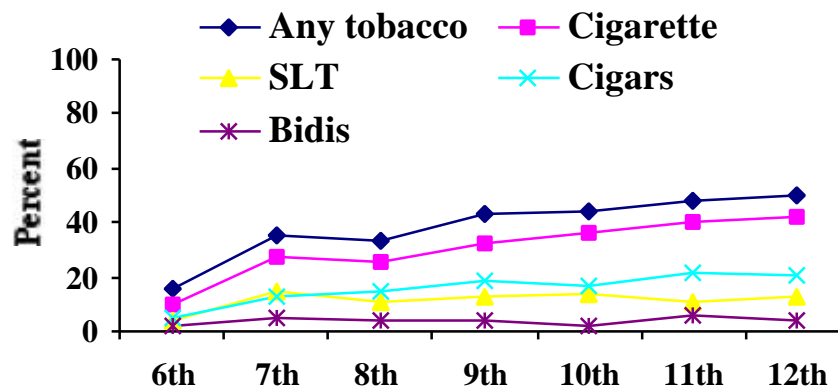
Use of novel tobacco products such as bidis and kreteks is an emerging public health problem among youth in the United States. Bidis (beedies) are small brown cigarettes from India consisting of tobacco wrapped in a leaf tied with a thread and are available in a variety of flavors. Kreteks (or clove cigarettes) are cigarettes containing tobacco and clove extract. Bidis and kreteks are not a safe alternative to cigarettes. It is estimated that bidis produce more than three times the amount of carbon monoxide and nicotine and more than five times the amount of tar than one cigarette.<sup>11</sup> Teens who smoke bidis instead of cigarettes say they like the taste, think they are safer, and report that they are cheaper and easier to buy than cigarettes.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Current Use of Any Tobacco Product

*Current use is defined by the CDC as using tobacco products on one or more of the past 30 days.*

- ✓ Overall, 28% of middle school and 46% of high school students report current use of any tobacco product. Cigarettes are the most prevalent and cigars are the second most popular type of tobacco product used by Kentucky youth.
- ✓ Current use of tobacco products sharply rises between 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade, and again between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades.



**Figure 19. Current use of any tobacco product by grade**

### Background and Significance

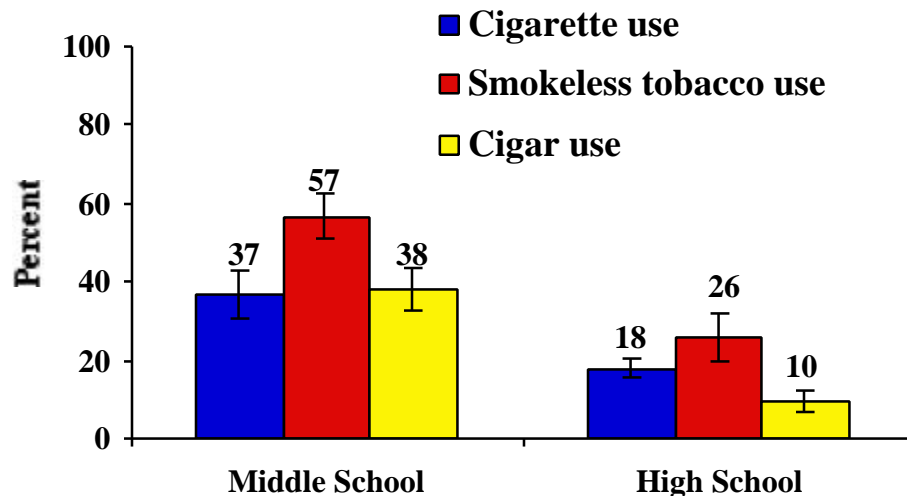
Nationally, 13% of middle school and 35% of high school students report using tobacco products on one or more of the past 30 days.<sup>1</sup> Current tobacco use among Kentucky middle school students is more than two times the national rate. Most people who suffer the adverse consequences of using cigarettes and smokeless tobacco begin use before they reach the age of 18, an age when they are not prepared for, or equipped to, make a decision that often has lifelong consequences.<sup>4</sup> Due to the high percentage of students who use tobacco in any form, there is a greater risk for use of alcohol or illicit drugs, nicotine addiction, and tobacco-related health problems among these students.<sup>12</sup>

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Age of Onset

*Lifetime use is defined by the CDC as ever having tried a tobacco product, even on only one occasion.*

- ✓ Regardless of type of tobacco product, middle school students who have ever used tobacco are more likely than high school students to have initiated tobacco use before age 11.
- ✓ Over one-third of middle school and nearly one-fifth of high school students who ever smoked a cigarette smoked their first whole cigarette before age 11.
- ✓ Over half of middle school and about one-fourth of high school students who ever used smokeless tobacco report their first use of smokeless tobacco before age 11.
- ✓ Over one-third of middle school and only 10% of high school students who ever smoked a cigar smoked their first cigar before age 11.



**Figure 20. Lifetime tobacco users who smoked first whole cigarette, used first smokeless tobacco, or smoked first cigar before age 11**

### Background and Significance

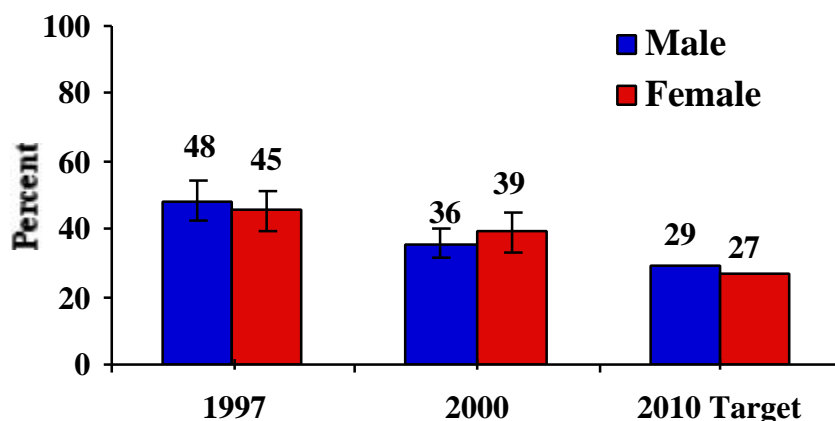
Almost all people who ever smoke cigarettes start before age 19. The younger the age of initiation of tobacco use, the more likely an individual will become addicted and suffer tobacco-related health problems. The fact that middle school students report an earlier age of onset than high school students in Kentucky indicates a need to begin prevention efforts at an early age and to involve families.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Trends in Tobacco Use Among High School Students: Current Smoking

*Current use is defined by the CDC as smoking cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days.*

- ✓ Overall, 47% of high school students were current smokers in 1997, and 37% of high school smokers were current smokers in 2000.
- ✓ Since 1997, there has been a significant decline in the percentage of high school males who are current smokers (48% to 36%).



**Figure 21. Progress in current smoking among high school students by gender, 1997-2000**

Note. 1997 data is from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey

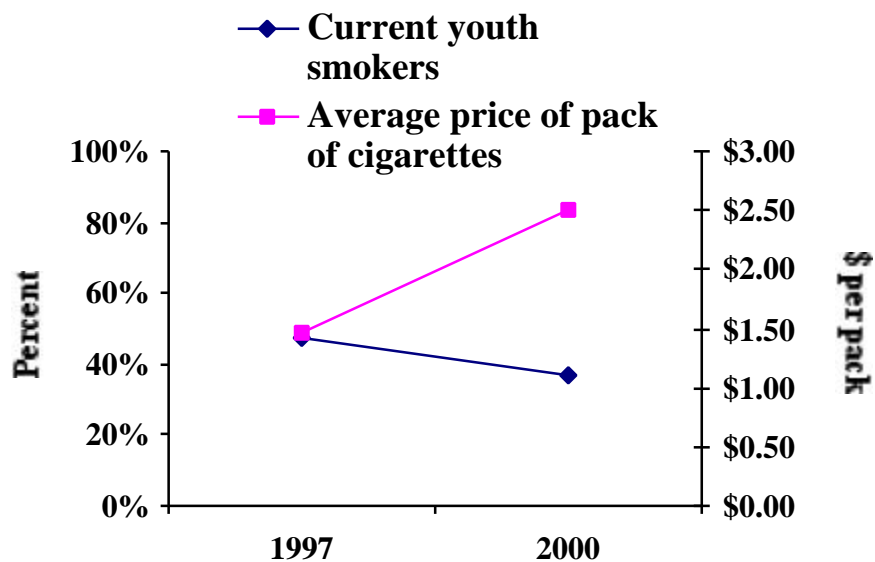
### Background and Significance

Male high school students in Kentucky were less likely to have smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days in 2000 than in 1997, as measured by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Since some of the survey items are the same on both the 1997 YRBS and the 2000 Kentucky Youth Tobacco Survey, comparisons to responses on these items over the three-year period can be made. Although the Kentucky YRBS is conducted in the odd years, the response rate in 1999 was not large enough to produce weighted data. In other words, the 1999 YRBS sample was not representative of Kentucky's youth. Since the 1997 YRBS sample was large enough, the 1997 YRBS data set was used in this report to make comparisons in youth tobacco use over time.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Smoking Prevalence and the Price of Cigarettes

- ✓ Although the cigarette excise tax in Kentucky has remained the same since 1997, the estimated average retail price of cigarettes has increased 53%, adjusting for inflation.<sup>13</sup> The percent of current smoking among high school students has declined 21% over the same time period.



**Figure 22. Current youth smokers and the average retail price of cigarettes in Kentucky, 1997 - 2000**

### Background and Significance

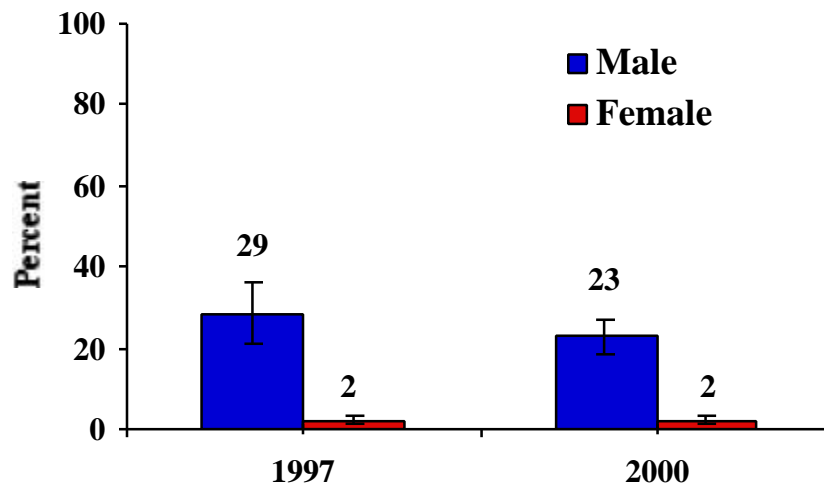
It is estimated that a 10% increase in price reduces overall cigarette consumption by 3% to 5%.<sup>3</sup> One study shows that male teens are more responsive to changes in the price of cigarettes than female teens.<sup>14</sup> The significant decline in smoking among high school males since 1997 could be due, in part, to the increase in the retail price of cigarettes. The average price of cigarettes and the average cigarette excise tax in the United States are well below those in most other industrialized countries. In Kentucky, the excise tax is .03 per pack, the second lowest in the nation.<sup>3</sup> There is currently no excise tax on smokeless tobacco in Kentucky.

## Tobacco Prevalence

### Trends in Tobacco Use Among High School Students: Current Smokeless Tobacco Use

*Current use is defined by the CDC as using smokeless tobacco (SLT) on one or more of the past 30 days.*

- ✓ There has been no significant decline in high school student current use of smokeless tobacco from 1997 to 2000.



**Figure 23. Progress in current smokeless tobacco use among high school students by gender, 1997 - 2000**

### Background and Significance

Smokeless tobacco use continues to be a predominantly male behavior. Compared to the nation, Kentucky high school males are more likely to use smokeless tobacco.<sup>1</sup> As with cigarettes, smokeless tobacco price increases result in lower SLT use.<sup>3</sup> Studies show that smokers turn to less expensive tobacco products such as SLT when cigarette prices rise. Given that cigarette prices have increased dramatically since 1997 (see Figure 22), male cigarette smokers may have switched to SLT.